

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TBIO, IN

SUBJECT: DEVELOPMENT OF COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH IN BURMA:

CONVERSATIONS WITH DR. U. MYA TU

REF: STATE 111736

1. SCI/ATT. METZNER MET WITH DR. U. MYA TU, DIRECTOR GENERAL DEPARTMENT OF MEDICAL RESEARCH, RANGOON, BURMA WHILE HE WAS IN NEW DELHI AS BURMESE REPRESENTATIVE ATTENDING THE 28TH REGIONAL COM-

MITTEE MEETING OF THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO) AUGUST 25-30.

2. DISCUSSION CENTERED AROUND A RESEARCH PROJECT PROPOSAL BY DR. HANSLUWKA AT WHO GENEVA WHO REQUESTED NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH SUPPORT FOR THE POSSIBLE USE OF PL 480 FUNDS INBURMA FOR AN INFANT MORTALITY SURVEY. MYA TU REVIEWED THE WHO PROTOCOL AND INDICATED THIS WAS CERTAINLY OF HIGH INTEREST TO BURMA AND WOULD DISCUSS IT FURTHER WITH GOVERNMENT OF BURMA (GOV) AUTHORITIES ON HIS RETURN TO BURMA. MYA TU ALSO MET WITH DR. PERERA OF WHO REGIONAL OFFICE IN NEW DELHI ON A SEPARATE OCCASION TO DISCUSS THIS PROJECT. METZNER INDICATED HE WOULD DETERMINE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE (DHEW) INTEREST IN SUPPORTING THIS PROJECT WITH PL 480 FUNDS THROUGH WHO.

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3. DR. MYA TU INVITED METZNER, AS DHEW REPRESENTATIVE FOR SOUTH EAST ASIA TO VISIT BURMA TO ATTEND THE BURMESE RESEARCH CONGRESS IN DECEMBER AND TO DISCUSS THIS PROJECT AS WELL AS OTHER POSSIBLE COOPERATION IN THE BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES, PARTICULARLY IN THE FIELDS OF NUTRITION AND MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH. THESE RESEARCH AREAS HAD BEEN DISCUSSED WITH MYA TU AND OTHER BURMESE SCIENTISTS ON TWO PREVIOUS VISITS TO BURMA IN 1972 AND 1973. METZNER INDICATED HE WOULD BE DELIGHTED TO VISIT RANGOON AGAIN AND WOULD BE IN CONTACT WITH MYA TU AND THE U.S. EMBASSY.

4. MYA TU SUGGESTED THAT ANY COLLABORATION WITH THE U.S. WOULD, MOST PROBABLY HAVE TO BE CHanneLED THROUGH WHO, OR UNICEF AS A MIDDLEMAN. THIS WOULD BE MORE ACCEPTABLE TO THE GOV AT THIS STAGE.

5. DR. MARTIN MCCAVITT'S VISIT TO BURMA LAST APRIL WAS DISCUSSED, AND MYA TU MENTIONED THAT THERE MAY BE AN INTEREST IN DEVELOPING REHABILITATION PROJECTS IN BURMA, BUT AGAIN THROUGH THE WHO. HE WOULD BE MOST INTERESTED IN RECEIVING MORE DETAILS CONCERNING THE NATURE OF THE REHABILITATION COLLABORATION. HE DID NOT KNOW HOW STRONG THE WHO INTEREST WAS IN REHABILITATION.

COMMENT:

WE NOTE BY REFTel THAT DR. MARTIN MCCAVITT IS PROPOSING A VISIT TO BURMA IN LATE OCTOBER. AFTER THESE DISCUSSIONS WITH MYA TU IT SEEMS IMPORTANT THAT, RATHER THAN COVERING A LARGE NUMBER OF AREAS FOR POSSIBLE COLLABORATION, TALKS SHOULD CONCENTRATE ON ONE OR TWO PROJECTS OF HIGH MUTUAL INTEREST. IN ADDITION, SINCE, IN ALL PROBABILITY IF COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS ARE DEVELOPED THEY WOULD BE CHanneLED THROUGH THE WHO OR UNICEF, THE HEADQUARTERS AND REGIONAL OFFICES OF THESE ORGANIZATIONS SHOULD BE INVOLVED FROM THE BEGINNING OF PROJECT DEVELOPMENT.

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